

ORIGINAL**UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION****VOLUME XVI****In the Matter Of:****J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER****HISTORIAN'S OFFICE
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12**Place - Washington, D. C.****Date - May 3, 1954****2862 to 3045****Pages.....****ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY****Official Reporters****306 Ninth Street, N. W.,
Washington 4, D. C.**

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6. CLASSIFIED INFO BRACKETED	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. OTHER (SPECIFY):	214 pp.
1st Review Date: 10/15/2012	
Authority: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DC <input type="checkbox"/> DD	
Name: Allen Hinters	
2nd Review Date: 10/23/12	
Authority: <input type="checkbox"/> DC <input type="checkbox"/> DD	
Name: S. Fivozinsky	

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PAPICHBOW

UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

In the Matter of
J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

Room 2022,
Atomic Energy Commission,
Building T-3,
Washington, D. C.
Monday, May 3, 1954.

The above entitled matter came on for hearing,
pursuant to recess, before the Board, at 2:30 p.m.

PERSONNEL SECURITY BOARD:

MR. GORDON GRAY, Chairman.
DR. WARD T. EVANS, Member.
MR. THOMAS A. MORGAN, Member.

PRESENT:

ROGER ROBB, and
C. A. ROLANDER, JR., Counsel for the Board.

J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER.
LLOYD K. GARRISON,
SAMUEL J. SILVERMAN, and
ALLAN B. ECKER, Counsel for J. Robert Oppenheimer.
HERBERT S. MARKS, Co-counsel for J. Robert Oppenheimer.

the way he talks, and the fact of his disengagement. The fact that there are no longer any threads binding him to an organization or connecting him with an organization. These would be some of the things. And no doubt his candor.

Q Would you expand on this candor point a little bit because I am wondering whether you are saying that his own statement about disengagement is to be made a primary factor in a determination.

A That certainly does depend on the man. His statement that there was something to disengage from is something I should think would be relevant.

Q Let me turn now to the so-called Vista report about which there has been very considerable testimony and not altogether consistent. Did you in fact prepare a draft of an introduction to Chapter 5 of the Vista Report?

A Yes, I did. It was not a solitary labor. When I got there, I found a mass of drafts, papers and notes. People who had written these were Christie, Bacher, Lauritsen, possibly others. But those were the principal ones. Christie had spent quite a lot of time at Los Alamos quite recently. We went over what they wanted to say and sometimes discussed it from the point of view, did they really want to say it, and were they sure that this was what they wanted to say. I think my contribution to the writing of this was that I -- well, let me back off.

The principal thing they wanted to say was that atomic weapons would be useful in the defense of Europe, in the antiair campaign, and many other ways that you will know as much about as I do, and that for this to happen, developments of hardware, of tactics, of command structure, of habits of behavior, of exercises needed to be gone into, which would give to our tactical readiness at least a small part of the training and precision which the Strategic Air Force already had. I believe my contribution apart from incidentals to the writing of this report was a notion that occurred very early and I believe has remained in all drafts, and that is still basic to my own views, and that is that this is not a very fully known subject -- what atomic weapons will do, either tactically or strategically, that as you go into battle, you will learn a great deal, and the primary preparation must be of two kinds. First that you have capabilities which allow you a lot of options, which give you choices that you can make at the time, and second, that you be so set up that if your guesses have been wrong, your technical preparations are such that you can change quickly in the course of the battle. If you are wrong about the effect of a bomb on an airfield, if you are not getting away with it, that you can make the proper reassignment of fissionable material and hardware and aircraft to do what is effective. These were the two guiding ideas that I believe I brought into the organization

of the report.

I then with the help of the others drafted a chapter-- either Chapter 5 or its introduction, I don't remember which it was called. It was a matter of some 20 pages, I believe, and had some 20 odd recommendations.

Q Was there in this draft at any stage the suggestion that the United States, this country, should state that it would not use atomic weapons strategically against the Soviet Union until after such weapons had been used against American cities?

A Let me say the best of what I recollect was in there. It is related to the question you asked but it is not identical with it. We said that we were in a coalition with the Europeans and that one of the things which we must be alert to is how the Europeans would view the destruction of their own cities by the enemy. Therefore, we needed to envisage the situation that would occur if we used our strategic air as a deterrent to the destruction of Europe's cities, as well as our own, and in that circumstance there was still a great deal that could and should be done with atomic weapons, and that we should be prepared for that contingency. We did not recommend a proclamation.

Q Was there in the language of the draft at any time a recommendation --

A I believe this is pretty close to the language of

the draft what I have told you. It was not a recommendation that this be the course of history. It was the contemplation of a possible course of history.

Q Did what you recall and what you have just testified to appear in the final document?

A Not in that form, and the reason should be clear from the testimony we have heard. The suggestion that there might be circumstances under which war would not be initiated by the full all-out Strategic Air Command was very disturbing to people in the Air Force, and many other people as well. It was not directly relevant to the main point we wished to make in this chapter. We therefore rewrote that part of it with a much more detailed listing of target systems in the order of the probable priority of the effect of strikes at them on the outcome of the battle in Europe -- priority simply in time. I believe that the draft which I last saw -- I have had the final report -- discussed the vast industrial target system in these terms, these much more neutral terms, rather than saying there might be circumstances under which they would not be attacked at once.

I may say, Mr. Chairman, that I think in the papers that were sent down to Washington, there is not only a copy of the final Vista Report, but there is a chapter or draft of Chapter 5 as we took it to Europe. I have not seen it for several years, but if these are material points, I think

that they can be found by you, if not by me.

Q I have stated earlier, I think, that in the course of this proceeding the Board has come to the conclusion that they have a material bearing. I will indicate to you, Dr. Oppenheimer, another respect they might be material.

First of all, it is true that the statement of the strategic use of atomic weapons was very important to the Air Force, particularly, and to the Defense Department. So therefore it was a material thing in this report.

A Yes.

Q We have had testimony from witnesses called by you of people who should have known everything that went on from beginning to end of this Vista Report, who testified clearly and unequivocally that there was no important change, that it was only a minor language change and a minor change in emphasis. I as a member of the Board am confused by this testimony.

A May I say a few words more?

Q Yes.

A We took this Chapter 5 -- I will not say as I had drafted it, but as it had been drafted, and perhaps amended and fiddled with a little bit, but with at least some of the provisions in it which were disturbing and the language which was disturbing. We took it to Europe. We showed it I think to General Schuyler, General Bruenther and General Eisenhower.

While we had been on our way to Europe General Norstad had been called home for consultation. It was several days later that we showed it to General Norstad. He expressed an objection. This objection was in rather formal terms. He objected to the distinction between tactical and strategic targets. He said at the present time any change in the air plan would certainly be bad, and that this was not an acceptable statement of the case. There was so much in the report that was good that he hoped we would take out the things that were not acceptable. He said possibly in a couple of years, a few years, the kind of thing you are thinking about will be realistic, but this is too early. It just won't work.

We said to him, after recovery, we think that this may be a matter of substance, and it may be a matter of language. Let us rewrite this in order to remove from it those phrases and those arrangements of ideas which appear to be bothering you and see if then this statement of the case is one which is satisfactory to you.

We did so. We showed it to him a day or so later and he said, "If I am asked, I will tell the Chief of Staff and the Secretary that I think this is a fine report and very valuable."

Now, it is clear that our critics thought these were substantial changes. It is clear that the authors of the report didn't think so, or they would not have made them.

C Was it clear to the authors that the critics thought they were substantial?

A It was clear to me, sir.

Q You would never describe these changes as mere changes in language or minor shifts in emphasis, would you? Excuse me for putting the question that way. Would you so describe them?

A Since the principal purpose of the report was to point out the many ways in which atomic weapons -- or at least relatively new ways in which atomic weapons could play a part in the Battle of Europe, I think that the heart of the report was wholly unchanged. I still think if we are ever called to fight the battle of Europe, we will have to face up to the questions of how deep, how massive and of what quality will our atomic source be. I do not think it was necessary to raise this question in that chapter of Vista because our arguments were solid without it. But they were even more solid. The reason we did was that at the time we didn't have much armament. Europe was not easy to defend, and the point that we wished to make was that there was more than one way in which the atom could be used in what might be a very critical campaign.

Have I lost your question?

Q Yes, it is all right, but I want to get back to it. You did not suggest -- I think you are testifying that you did

not suggest -- in any draft that we make a statement that we would not use these weapons strategically, that is, with respect to the USSR, unless and until they had first been used against our cities, and industrial centers.

A We did not recommend such a statement.

Q Did you by implication recommend such a position?

A My memory, and I probably should be less categorical than I am, my memory is that we contemplated a situation in which we would in fact not do this. In fact, we would not use an all out strategic attack, but consider our Strategic Air Force as a deterrent to Soviet attack upon the cities of our allies and our own.

Q As far as you know, about the final version of the Vista Report, did that notion appear?

A Yes, there was still a remark that the deterrent effect of our Strategic Air Command with regard to the protection of Allied capitals would be an important factor to take into consideration along with many others. This is from memory, but they were things I was interested in and I believe I am telling the true story.

Q As long as your memory serves, did you at the time think we should have a policy, whether publicly announced or not, which would lead us to suffer atomic attack upon our cities before we would make a similar attack upon Soviet cities?

A I think the question of our own cities, Mr. Gray,

never came into this report, or at least was not the prominent thing. The prominent problem --

Q I didn't ask about the report, then. I asked in your best recollection was this a view you entertained.

A That we would welcome an attack on our own cities?

Q No, I don't think that is an accurate restatement of my question. I said that we would suffer an attack upon our cities with the use of atomic weapons before we would ever make a strategic strike against the UESR.

A Oh, lord, no. I mean the very first thing we would do against the USSR is to go after the strategic air bases and to the extent you can the atomic bases of the USSR. You would do everything to reduce their power to impose an effective strategic attack upon us.

Q Which might include attacks on cities and industrial concentrations.

A It might, although clearly they are not the forward component of the Strategic Air Command.

Q Perhaps we are tangled up with the question of strategic.

A I have always been clear that the thing that you do without fail and with certainty is to attack every air base that has planes on it or may have planes on it the first thing. I believe our report said that.

Q I will try again. Did you have at that time the view

that we should not use the atomic weapons against any militarily promising target which might include cities in the USSR until after such weapons had been used against such targets in this country?

A I think I have never been entirely clear on that. This seemed to me one of the most difficult questions before us. I am sure that I have always felt that it should be a question that we were capable of answering affirmatively and capable of thinking about at the time.

Q This is not clear in your mind as to what our position should be, you say. Have you ever thought about it in terms of a public announcement as to policy in that regard?

A This has always struck me as very dangerous.

Q Then you did not advocate a public announcement?

A You mean have I publicly advocated it?

Q No. I mean did you feel that the United States should make a public announcement about its policy, whatever it might be, with regard to the use of atomic weapons against the Soviet Union against whatever targets might present themselves?

A In the nine years we have been talking about these things, I have said almost everything on almost every side of every question. I take it you are asking whether in some official document I unequivocally recommended that we make a public pronouncement of our policy with regard to this, and

to that my best and fairly certain answer is no.

Q I really asked you what your own personal view was.

A I think that we had better not make public announcements about what we are going to do, if and when. But I do think we need to know more about it and think more about it than we had some years ago.

Q You don't think the import of the original draft of the introduction to Chapter 5 was to this effect?

A No. It was to call very prominently to the attention of the services that there might be considerations against the then present air plan, and that nevertheless there were very important things to do with the atom.

Now, I would feel a little more comfortable if I had a draft of Chapter 5 of Vista that we are talking about before me.

Q I have not seen it myself, Dr. Oppenheimer.

I have asked you a lot of questions about how the crash program, as the issue, came before the General Advisory Committee in the meeting in October 1949. Perhaps I asked you some questions about that.

A I think you did.

Q But in any event, has the testimony, all that you have heard in the last weeks, made it clearer to you how this came as the alternative, crash program or not?

A I am a little clearer. I think the greatest

clarification came from Dr. Alvarez's testimony. It is clearer to me now than it has been before that in the meeting with the Commission, the Commission probably through its Chairman -- told us what was on their minds. It is clear to me that the Commission was being besieged by requests to authorize this, to proceed with that, all on the ground that these were the proper ways to expedite the thermonuclear program, and all on the ground that the thermonuclear program was the thing to do. It is clear to me that the Commission asked for our views on this.

Q Looking back on it, do you feel that the GAC in consistency and with technical integrity could have recommended something short of the crash program, but something at the same time that was more active and productive than the alternate program?

A Indeed I do. Indeed I do. We could have very well written the report to the following effect, that the present state of the program is such and such as we see it. This we did do. That in order to get on with it, this and this and this and this would need to be done. This we did do. We could have said that the present state of fog about this is such that we don't really know just what the problem is that is to be decided. Let us get to work and remove as much of this fog as fast as possible.

We could further have said the decision as to

whether this is the important, the most important, an important, an undesirable or disastrous course involves lots of considerations of which we are dimly aware in the military and political sphere, and we hope that these will be taken into account when the decision is made. We could have written such a report.

I think apart from what personal things, feelings, still of the people involved, the best explanation of why we wrote the kind of report we did was that we said what we thought, rather than pointing out that there were other people who could be asked to evaluate (a) because we thought, and (b) because the pressure, the threat of public discussion, and the feel of the time was such that we thought our stating our own case, which was a negative case, was a good way, and perhaps the only way to insure mature deliberation on the basic problem, should we or shouldn't we.

Q And your position as reflected in the report under no circumstances should we?

A I think that is not quite right. I think the report itself limits itself to saying that we are reluctant, we don't think we should make a crash program, we are agreed on that, and that the statement in the majority annex that it would be better if these weapons were never brought into being was a wish, but it was not a statement that there were no circumstances under which we would also have to bring them.

into being.

Q Wouldn't you say that the impression that the majority annex was calculated to give was that those who signed it were opposed to anything that would lead to the development of the hydrogen bomb?

A That is right, under the then existing circumstances.

Q So that really the majority in effect would not have been sympathetic with any acceleration of the program which would lead to the development of the bomb?

A Of course. That does not mean that we would not have been sympathetic to studies and clarification. This was a question of whether you were going to set out to make it, test it and have it.

May I make one other comment? This was not advice to Los Alamos as to what it should or should not study. This was not advice to the Commission as to what it should or should not build. Some such advice we gave in that report. This was an earnest, if not very profound, statement of what the men on that committee thought about the desirability of making a super bomb.

Q And they felt that it was undesirable?

A We did.

Q If the Commission had taken their advice, or if the government ultimately had taken the advice of the General Advisory Committee, we would not now have it.

A I am not certain of that, but it is possible.

Q Your advice, it seems to me, has said, and as I interpreted it, the majority annex was that we should never have it. I would guess if that advice had been taken literally the Commission would have --

A The majority annex I still think never said that we should not have it. I think it said that it would be better if such weapons never existed.

Q I think this is an important point, and I would like to hold on that.

A All right. But could we have the context which I also have forgotten?

Q Yes. I will try not to take it out of context.

MR. ROBB: Here is the majority annex.

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, would it not be helpful if Dr. Oppenheimer could look at the report which he has not seen for some time.

THE WITNESS: I saw it the other day.

MR. GRAY: I will show it to him again. I want to pick out the portions that I think are pertinent here, and let him make any observations about context. The security officer cautioned me that I am really getting on difficult ground.

May I interline this?

MR. ROLANDER: Yes.

THE WITNESS: Does the majority annex contain

information which should not be on this record?

MR. GRAY: I do not know.

(Mr. Rolander handed copy of report to Dr. Oppenheimer.)

THE WITNESS: I would like to quote the entire paragraph, if that is permissible. I see something -- well, I don't know.

MR. GRAY: I see no reason why the whole paragraph should not be quoted.

MR. ROLANDER: It is all right.

THE WITNESS: This is the fourth paragraph of a six paragraph annex:

"We believe a Super bomb should never be produced. Mankind would be far better off not to have a demonstration of the feasibility of such a weapon until the present climate of world opinion changes."

That is that paragraph in its entirety.

BY MR. GRAY:

Q That language is pretty clear, isn't it, that "We believe a super bomb should never be produced"?

A Sure it is.

Q So that there was not any question that the six people of the majority were saying that we should not take steps to develop and produce.

A Let me indicate to you --

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, could he read it once

more, because it is the first we heard it.

THE WITNESS: This is one paragraph. The document is full of the word "mankind" and this paragraph reads:

"We believe a super bomb should never be produced. Mankind would be far better off not to have a demonstration of the feasibility of such a weapon until the present climate of world opinion changes."

Let me indicate --

BY MR. GRAY:

Q The question I would ask which would be related to this paragraph is -- I am not attacking the motivation of those who held that belief, I am simply saying that the belief is clearly stated there, that the super bomb should never be produced.

A That a super bomb should never be produced. But look at what that means. If we had had indication that we could not prevent the enemy from doing it, then it was clear that a super bomb would be produced. Then our arguments would be clearly of no avail. This was an exhortation -- I will not comment on its wisdom or its folly -- to the government of the United States to seek to prevent the production of super bombs by anyone.

Q Again without reference to its wisdom or its folly, is it unreasonable to think that the Commission, reading this report or hearing it made, whichever form it took, would

believe that the majority of the General Advisory Committee recommended that the government not proceed with steps which would lead to the production of a super bomb?

A That is completely reasonable. We did discuss this point with the Commission on two subsequent occasions. On one occasion we made it clear that nothing in what we had said was meant to obtain should it be clear or should it be reasonably probable that the enemy was on this trail.

In another we made it clear that there was a sharp distinction between theoretical study and experiment and invention and production and development on the other hand. So that the Commission I think had a little more than this very bald statement to go on.

Q Dr. Oppenheimer, I am looking at --

A May I see that, too?

Q Yes, you may. I am going to show it to you.

A Do I have it?

MR. ROLANDER: Yes. Part 1.

THE WITNESS: Right. I have it before me.

BY MR. GRAY:

Q May I ask whether all of Dr. Alvarez or if none of Dr. Alvarez's testimony was treated as restricted?

MR. ROBB: No, sir, it was not.

BY MR. GRAY:

Q Dr. Oppenheimer, in Part 1, paragraph 3 --

MR. GARRISON: What document?

THE WITNESS: This is a top secret report of the General Advisory Committee dated October 30, 1949. This is the report as such, as distinct from the annexes.

MR. GRAY: May I read this sentence?

MR. ROLANDER: The difficulty is that I have not obtained from the Commission the approval to quote directly the minutes of this meeting. It seems to me that if general statements are made with reference to either Dr. Oppenheimer's recollection or general questions are raised, it would be proper.

MR. GRAY: All right.

THE WITNESS: Is it the last sentence?

BY MR. GRAY:

Q That is right.

A Fine.

Q Again, that is pretty clear, isn't it?

A Indeed it is. I think this has been read into the record by Mr. Robb.

MR. ROBB: I don't know. I was under the same handicap that Mr. Gray is laboring under. I don't know whether I read it to you or paraphrased it, but you and I knew what we were talking about.

THE WITNESS: Yes, it is in the record.

MR. ROBB: It may have been that it was in the

classified portion of the testimony.

THE WITNESS: We recommended a certain reactor program, we had a lot of reasons for it, and we said that one of the reasons might be that this would be useful for the super and that reason we did not agree with it, and it was understood that building this reactor was not a step in making the super. That seems to be a paraphrase.

BY MR. GRAY:

Q If you will look at page 4 of that document, the first sentence in the last paragraph that begins on that page.

A Right.

Q Reference to the majority of the Committee there makes it clear --

A Wait, now. I am not with you. The second paragraph, page 4?

Q No, the first sentence in the last.

A I have only two paragraphs on my page 4.

Q There is a sentence that begins, "We are somewhat divided "--

A Right, I have that.

Q That sentence, and the following sentence.

A Right.

Q From that it would appear that the majority of the members of the GAC at that time felt unqualifiedly that they opposed not only the production, but the development.

A Right.

Q So that my question to you is, in this proceeding there has been a lot of testimony that the GAC was opposed to a particular crash program. Isn't it clear that it was not only the crash program that the majority of the GAC found themselves in opposition to, but they were just opposed to a program at all which had to do with thermonuclear weapons?

A I think it is very clear. May I qualify this?

Q Yes, you may.

A I think many things could have qualified our unqualified view. I have mentioned two of them. I will repeat them. One is indications of what the enemy was up to. One of them is a program technically very different from the one that we had before us. One of them a serious and persuasive conclusion that the political effort to which we referred to in our annexes could not be successful.

Q Now, following the government's decision in January 1950, would it be unfair to describe your attitude towards the program as one of passive resistance?

A Yes.

Q That would be unfair?

A I think so.

MR. GARRISON: Unfair, Mr. Chairman?

MR. GRAY: He said unfair to so describe it.

BY MR. GRAY:

Q Would it be unfair to describe it as active support?

A Active could mean a great many things. I was not active as I was during the war. I think it would be fairer to describe it as active support as an advisor to the Commission, active support in my job on the General Advisory Committee. Not active support in the sense that I rolled up my sleeves and went to work and not active support in the sense that I assumed or could assume the job of attracting to the work the people who would have come to a job in response to a man's saying, "I am going to do this; will you help me."

Q You testified that you did not seek to dissuade anyone from working on the project.

A Right.

Q There have been a good many others who have given similar testimony. It also, however, has been testified there there would have been those who would have worked on the project had you encouraged them to do so.

A There has been testimony that there were people who believed this.

Q Yes. Do you believe that?

A I think it possible. Let me illustrate. In the summer of 1952, there was this Lincoln summer study which had to do with continental defense. On a few limited aspects of that I know something. On most I am an ignoramus. I think

it was Zacharias that testified that the reason they wanted me associated with it was that that would draw people into it. The fact that I was interested in it would encourage others. In that sense I think that if I had gone out to Los Alamos even if I had done nothing but twiddled my thumbs, if it had been known that I had gone out to promote the super, it might have had an affirmative effect on other people's actions. I don't believe that you can well inspire enthusiasm and recruit people unless you are doing something about it yourself.

Q Furthermore, it was fairly well known in the community -- that is, the community of physicists and people who would work on this -- that you had not been in favor of this program prior to the government's decision. That probably was a factor?

A I would think inevitably so.

Q Do you think that it is possible that some of those individuals who were at Princeton whose names were suggested for the project might have gone had they thought you were enthusiastic for the program?

A I don't believe this was the issue. For one thing, I know that I said to all of them that it was a very interesting program and that they should find out about it. For another -- I am talking about a group of people that has been testified to, but as to whom I don't know who they were, I don't know what these names are -- but the issue has usually

be, should a man give up his basic research in science in favor of applied work, and I believe it was on that ground and on the personality ground as to whether they did or did not want to work with Dr. Teller, and whether they did or did not want to go to Los Alamos, the decisions would have been made. I don't think my lack of enthusiasm -- I don't believe I would have manifested a y, nor do I believe it would have been either persuasive or decisive. This is in that period after we were going ahead.

Q Do you remember at approximately what date it was that you offered to resign as Chairman of the General Advisory Committee?

A Yes, approximately. It was when Mr. Dean had taken office, the first time I saw him. That would have been perhaps late summer of 1950. I believe I testified that at the time of the President's decision Dr. Conant told me he had recently talked with the Secretary of State, that the Secretary of State felt that it would be contrary to the national interest if either he or I at that time resigned from the General Advisory Committee; that this would promote a debate on a matter which was settled. The question was how soon after that could this be done.

I talked to Mr. Dean, not primarily about quitting the Advisory Committee, but about quitting the chairmanship about which by then I felt not too comfortable. That would

have been August, September of 1950.

MR. GRAY: I think I have no more questions. Dr. Evans.

DR. EVANS: Dr. Oppenheimer, you said you had received a birthday card from Chevalier?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

DR. EVANS: He is now in France, is that it?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

DR. EVANS: Is he teaching or writing?

THE WITNESS: I remember very much what he is doing because he discussed this with us. He is translating, and part of his job is translating for UNESCO, or was. I don't know that it still is.

DR. EVANS: May I ask you this question. Have you received any cards or letters from any of these other men like Peters, Hawkins, Weinberg or Serber?

THE WITNESS: We had a birthday card from Mr. and Mrs. Serber, not from the others.

DR. EVANS: Where is Mr. Serber now?

THE WITNESS: He is a professor at Columbia and a consultant to the Atomic Energy Commission establishment at Brookhaven.

DR. EVANS: And you say you didn't hear from the others?

THE WITNESS: No.

DR. EVANS: This has not much to do with this case. Did you see a little squib in the Washington Post this morning saying if the English had made a super bomb --

THE WITNESS: I didn't see it.

DR. EVANS: I was interested in it. I didn't put much confidence in it, but I was interested.

THE WITNESS: I didn't see it.

MR. EVANS: That is all.

MR. GRAY: Mr. Robb.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Doctor, what was the address on that card from Dr. Chevalier? Was it addressed to you at Princeton or here?

A I think it was addressed to Princeton and forwarded here. I don't know.

Q Was there any note with the card?

A I think there was.

Q Do you recall what it said?

A No, I can find this. It is back --

Q Do you receive a card from him every year at your birthday?

A No, this was my fiftieth birthday.

Q Do you know how he knew that?

A No.

Q Do you recall what the note said?

A Not very much.

Q Any?

A It didn't say very much and I don't recall it. It was written by his wife and it said greetings from our Butte.

Q Our what?

A Our Butte. They live on a hill.

Q Doctor, you testified you didn't feel too comfortable as Chairman of GAC in 1950, is that right?

A Yes.

Q Why not?

A Because on a very major point of policy I had expressed myself, had become identified with a view which was not now national policy. I thought that there could be strong arguments for having as Chairman of that committee someone who had from the beginning been enthusiastic and affirmative.

Q Did you feel that others of the scientific community might well feel that you still were not enthusiastic?

A This is not a consideration that crossed my mind at that time. I think I had more in mind that when on an important thing a man is overruled, his word is not as useful as it was before.

Q Do you now feel that others in the scientific community might then have believed that you still were not very enthusiastic about the thermonuclear?

A I know that now.

Q Do you now feel that your lack of enthusiasm which

might have been communicated to other scientists might have discouraged them from throwing themselves into the program?

A I think this point has been discussed a great deal. I don't have substantive knowledge about it. I think that the critical, technical views which the General Advisory Committee expressed from time to time had a needling effect on the progress at Los Alamos which probably had something to do with the emergence of the brilliant inventions.

Q To get back to the question, Doctor, would you mind answering that question?

A Could you say it again?

MR. ROBB: Would you read it.

(Question read by the reporter.)

THE WITNESS: I suppose so.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Doctor, you mentioned the brilliant invention. That was Dr. Teller's?

A It was indeed. I should always work Ulam's name in, but Tellers should be in bigger type.

Q Who were the principal, to use the newspaper phrase, architects of the thermonuclear?

A Teller.

Q Teller. You would not say you were?

A No. There is a part of all these things that I did invent. As I testified, it is extremely useful, but it is not

very bright.

Q Is that the one you got the patent on?

A This is mentioned in the patent, but it is only a part of what we got the patent on. Most of what we got the patent on was wrong.

Q Doctor, exploring for a bit your work in recent years on the thermonuclear, I believe you testified previously some days ago that you had been thinking about it and trying to learn about the program, is that right?

A It would be a reasonable thing for me to have said.

Q When you did do any work for the Atomic Energy Commission, you were on the basis of a per diem consultant, were you?

A You mean since I left the GAC?

Q Yes.

A Yes, sir.

Q And when you did any work for other agencies, you were on the basis of a per diem consultant?

A I think with the GAC, with the RDB, with most of these we were paid for days at work and in travel.

Q Yes.

A In the case of the Science Advisory Committee, there was no pay. In the case of the State Department panel there was no pay. But there was some kind of subsistence allowance.

Q Any work that you may have done on the thermonuclear

program would have been done for the Atomic Energy Commission, wouldn't it?

A Any traveling around or anything like that. If I thought about things at home, that would not be charged to the Atomic Energy Commission

Q No. I have before me a record showing that in 1953 your total compensation received from the Atomic Energy Commission was \$250. Would that accord with your recollection?

A It would be consistent with it. I would have no recollection.

Q That would amount to some --

A Two and a half days. This would certainly correspond to a visit to Los Alamos or Sandia.

Q Did you in 1953 go to Los Alamos or Sandia in connection with the thermonuclear program?

A I did in 1953.

Q But that amount of work would fall within the scope of your statement that you did not take your coat off on this program, wouldn't it?

A I was thinking of the earlier days when I was a member of the GAC.

Q Yes.

A I still didn't take my coat off.

Q Doctor, I would like to return briefly to Vista. That was a project which was carried out in Pasadena?

A The headquarters were in Pasadena, and all the activities I know of were in Pasadena. No, no. There were things that I didn't participate in, field trips, inspections.

Q But your connection with it had to do with Pasadena.

A It did.

Q Did you go to Pasadena in November 1951?

A I went out in the fall. I don't remember the date.

Q How long were you out there?

A Not less than a week nor more than two is my best guess. Perhaps only six days.

Q Was that toward the end of the project?

A It was toward the end of the writing of the report.

Q Did you complete your answer?

A Yes, I answered the question.

Q While you were there on that occasion did you prepare a draft of an introduction to Chapter 5 of the report?

A I prepared what I believe to be a draft or had helped to prepare a draft of Chapter 5, not the introduction.

Q Was that presented to the people who were there by Dr. DuBridge?

A As to that I have heard only his testimony or your questioning. I was not there.

Q You were not there?

A No.

Q Let me ask you, Doctor, in order that you may have

a chance to comment on it on the record, and that the record will be plain, in that draft that you prepared was there anything about dividing the stockpile of atomic weapons into three parts?

A There was indeed. I think again the phrasing was not quite that. This was something that I found in the working papers when I got there. It had been worked over with great elaborateness. I believe that the phrasing was, we may consider, or we may think of, our stockpile should be thought of as divided roughly into three equal parts. I think that is the way it went.

Q One part to be held in reserve, one part assigned to the Strategic Air Command, and the third part assigned to the tactical defense of Europe, is that right?

A To tactical air.

Q That was in that draft.

A I believe so. It was certainly in the talk, in the papers that I found there. I am not even sure that it was missing from the final Vista Report.

Q That was my next question. First, was it in the draft of Chapter 5 which you testified you prepared after you got there?

A I believe so, yes.

Q Was that in the final report?

A As to that, I don't remember.

Q The best evidence of that would be the final report.

A That is right.

Q Did you inform yourself as to what the final report was?

A I read it. I had an awful time getting it. Everybody had an awful time getting it. I read it long after it was submitted.

Q That suggestion as to the division of atomic stockpile was a pretty important matter, wasn't it?

A We thought of it as rather important because we thought it diverged from the existing policy and would almost certainly not be accepted in full, but that the direction in which it went was a healthy direction.

Q It represented in effect some restriction on the freedom of action of the Air Force, didn't it?

A Very little, because the main emphasis was that whatever you thought, you should be able to convert from one to the other at a minute's notice.

Q But if the Air Force could use its atomic weapons in any way it chose, it was a restriction to say that you ought to divide it up into three parts and assign each part to a particular function, wasn't it?

A I think this is quite a misrepresentation. We were not given an Air Force which could use its atomic weapons in any way it chose. We were given an Air Force at that

time quite incapable of using atomic weapons tactically.

Q Given an Air Force which had no such restriction, this certainly represented a change in policy.

A If the Air Force had no restrictions, any restriction would be a change of policy.

Q Was there in the draft of the report which you prepared on your visit to Pasadena in the fall of 1951 any suggestion that the United States should announce that no strategic air attack would be directed against Russia unless such an attack were first started by Russia, either against the European Zone of Interior or Against our cities or against our European allies?

A I have testified on this as fully as I could in response to the Chairman's questions.

Q I want to have it specific, if I may, Doctor -- a specific response to that particular question.

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, is Mr. Robb reading from the record?

MR. ROBB: No, sir, I am not. I don't have it. This is a draft, and we can't find this draft.

THE WITNESS: I can tell you where you can find it.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Before you do that, would you mind answering the question?

A I would mind answering it, because I have been over

this ground as carefully as I know how. When you say suggest I don't know whether you mean recommendation or consideration.

Q Was there any language in the report to that effect?

A To what effect, that this might be the state of affairs?

Q That this might be a good idea.

MR. GARRISON: What might be a good idea? I am lost.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Was there any language in the draft to the effect that it would be a good idea if the United States should announce that no atomic attack would be directed against Russia unless such an attack was first started by Russia either against our Zone of Interior or against our European allies.

A To the very best of my recollection, we said we may be faced with a situation in which this occurs.

Q We may be faced with a situation in which that was desirable, is that right?

A Yes, in which it is wise, or in which it is done.

Q Was there any language in the final draft or the final report which said that?

A In the final draft of the final report it said that in the consideration of the use of our strategic air power, one of the factors should be the deterrent value -- I have not got the words -- the deterrent value of this strategic

air in the protection of European cities.

Q Do you consider that to be different from the language we have talked about before?

A It is manifestly different language.

Q Yes. And don't you think the difference is important?

A It was very important to our readers.

Q Was there any language in the draft of the Vista Report when you were out there to the effect that at the present state of the art the value of the thermonuclear weapons could not be assessed, and therefore they were not included in your study?

A This is something which I found written when it was out there. It is not something that I myself wrote, and I don't know whether it was in my draft or not.

Q Did you agree with it?

A As far as tactical things, quite definitely. I was not present during the discussions to which Griggs referred at which Teller had talked about it. I don't know whether the value of thermonuclear weapons as tactical weapons has been or can be assessed.

Q You restrict it to tactical weapons. Suppose you take that restriction off. Was there anything in the report that the value of the thermonuclear weapon could not be assessed?

A As to that I don't remember.

Q Doctor, you testified that Mrs. Oppenheimer has told you that she may have given some money to Steve Nelson, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Did she tell you how much?

A No.

Q Did you ask her?

A Yes.

Q What did she say?

A She said she didn't remember. Not that she had told me that she had given, but that she may have given.

Q Did you ever give Nelson any money?

A I don't believe so.

Q Mr. Gray asked you some questions about your contributions that you made from time to time that you told us about before. Let me ask you, did you ever receive any receipt for those contributions?

A I don't believe so.

Q Did you ever sign any pledge to make contributions?

A Oh, no.

Q Did you ever make any moral agreement with respect to the amount of your contributions?

A No, I don't think so.

Q Were these contributions made at any regular interval?

A There may have been some sometimes when they were

more or less regular, but over the time they were not regular.

Q You say they may have been more or less regular.

You mean monthly?

A I have no reason to think that.

Q You say you have no reason to think it?

A Right.

Q What was the basis for your suggestion that might have been the case?

A Because I don't remember the timing of it.

Q It could have been, maybe, or maybe it wasn't; is that your answer?

A It could not have been monthly over years. It might have been monthly over a few months.

Q There are one or two things in the record I would like to clear up a little bit. Has Paul Crouch ever been in your house?

A I think not.

Q You mentioned having seen Miss Tatlock on various occasions. Were any of those occasions meetings of Communist groups?

A No.

Q Or left wing groups?

A If you are willing to include Spanish bazaars. I never saw her at a political meeting.

Q Did you ever see her at a meeting where a Communist

talk was given?

A I certainly don't remember.

MR. GARRISON: What kind of a talk?

MR. ROBB: Communist.

MR. GARRISON: A Communist talk?

MR. ROBB: Yes.

THE WITNESS: We went together to some CIO affair, but I don't remember who talked.

MR. GRAY: Could this have been the FAECT?

THE WITNESS: No, it wasn't. It was in San Francisco. I don't know what it was.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Did you ever go with her to any meeting of any kind at which literature was passed out?

A The only meeting at which literature was passed out that I recollect is the one at my brother's house, which I described.

Q Was Miss Tatlock there?

A No.

Q What kind of literature was that, Communist literature that was passed out?

A I think so, yes.

Q At that meeting were any pledges of contributions made by any of the people present?

A I am not certain. My impression is that it was

some kind of a dues gathering.

Q I believe you testified to that.

A I am not certain.

Q By the way, you mentioned the meeting you went to at the home of Miss Louise Bransten. Do you recall that?

A Yes.

Q Who invited you to go to that meeting?

A I don't remember. I can presume that it was the hostess.

Q Do you recall how you happened to hear the meeting was going to be held that particular time?

A We were invited, whether by phone or by personal invitation, by letter, I don't know.

Q You knew Miss Bransten fairly well?

A Not very well, not --

Q Beg pardon?

A Not well enough to know the things you said about her.

Q Doctor, did you ever notice a man named Albert Lang Lewis?

A I don't remember. Can you tell me how or where I might have known him? The name means nothing as you read it.

Q Who lived in, I think, Los Angeles.

A It means nothing to me so far.

Did you know a man named Allen Lane?

A It also means nothing to me.

Q Did you ever know a man named Melvin Gross?

A The name doesn't sound as unfamiliar as the others but it rings no bell.

Q You mentioned the other day a man named Straus.

A Yes.

Q I believe you mentioned him as perhaps having been present at one or more of these meetings you attended. Do you remember that?

A That is right.

Q Was he a businessman in San Francisco?

A Or an attorney, I don't know. He was not a college person.

Q Did you see him around rather frequently?

A No. I believe I once had dinner at his home, maybe my wife and I had dinner with them once. I think that is the only time.

Q Do you recall when that was?

A No.

Q Why did you think perhaps he might have been present at one of these meetings that you went to?

A My recollection is that he said something very foolish, but if you press me to try to remember who was at these meetings --

Q I was curious because you searched your recollection as to who might have been present, and he was one of the men

that came up and I wanted to ask you how you happened to remember him.

A I think either he was involved in an argument or he and my wife were involved in an argument, or he said something that made an impression.

Q Do you recall what the foolish thing he said was?

A No, I certainly can't.

Q Was it before or after that meeting that you had dinner at the house?

A I don't remember.

Q Did you ever hear of a man named Bernard Libby?

A I don't think so.

Q Doctor, is it your testimony that you told a false story to Colonel Pash so as to stimulate him to investigate Eltenton?

A That appears not to have been necessary.

Q Was that your testimony?

A No, it is not. I testified that I had great difficulty explaining why I told him a false story, but that I believed that I had two things in mind. One was to make it clear that there was something serious, or rather I thought there might be something serious and the other was not to tell the truth.

Q Did you have any reason to believe that Colonel Pash would not be active in investigating the story you told?

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, isn't this covering ground that has already been gone over this afternoon with you, and already over again in cross examination? I mean do we have to go on and on with this?

MR. GRAY: I think that clearly this is one of the important things in the Commission's letter. I think I will ask Mr. Robb to proceed unless he feels he is simply covering ground that has already been covered.

MR. GARRISON: I think he ought to try as much as possible not to put words in the witness' mouth.

MR. ROBB: I am cross examining him.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q I asked you whether you had any reason to believe that Colonel Pash would not be active in investigating your story?

A I had no reason to believe anything. I had never met Colonel Pash before.

Q Are you really serious, as you stated to the Chair, that you told Colonel Pash for the purpose of stimulating him?

A I have been very serious in all my testimony and certainly not less in this very bizarre incident.

Q You would agree that testimony is somewhat bizarre, wouldn't you?

A That is not what I said.

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, he is arguing with the

witness.

MR. ROBB: No, I am asking.

MR. GARRISON: You are asking, wouldn't you agree, and this and that, which seems to me to be argument. I let it go if the Chairman thinks not. But it seems to me to be an attempt to make him say what does not come from him in his own natural way.

MR. ROBB: The word "bizarre" was his, not mine.

THE WITNESS: I said the incident was bizarre.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Dr. Oppenheimer, you testified in response to a question by Mr. Gray that you told General Groves that there were not three men, is that right?

A That is right.

Q To whom did you make the first disclosure of the identity of the unknown professor?

A I believe General Groves.

Q What were the circumstances?

A I think that it was at Los Alamos.

Q If you told him that there were not three men, would you give us your thoughts, Doctor, on why it was that the telegrams that went out announcing the name of Haakon Chevalier all referred to three men?

A I found this quite comprehensible when you read them.

Q Have you seen Dr. E. U. Condon since 1951?

A Oh, surely.

Q Frequently?

A No.

Q Did you see him in 1952?

A I would assume so. He is a member of the Visiting Committee to the Physics Department at Harvard of which I am Chairman. We see each other at meetings. I would assume I saw him in 1952, but I don't recall.

Q 1953?

A As to that I am much less sure.

Q Have you received any other letters from him other than the letters he wrote you about Peters and the one he wrote you about Lomanitz?

A Yes, I have had other letters from him.

Q When?

A He has recently been having his clearance reviewed.

Q His what?

A His clearance reviewed, and he wrote me a letter about that.

MR. GARRISON: Mr. Chairman, I wonder why we have to go into his relations with Dr. Condon. Are they a part of this case?

MR. GRAY: Dr. Condon --

MR. GARRISON: I don't know what this is about.

MR. GRAY: Dr. Oppenheimer testified earlier --

THE WITNESS: I have no reason not to answer these questions.

MR. GARRISON: I withdraw my objection.

MR. GRAY: I would like to complete my sentence that it was probably due to Dr. Condon's frantic -- I am not sure about the language -- at least Dr. Condon's disturbance about Lomanitz that he made the representations on behalf of Lomanitz. I believe that was your testimony.

MR. GARRISON: I think the testimony was that was Bethe --

THE WITNESS: No, that was a different matter.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q I think you said that Dr. Condon wrote you about his clearance.

A Right.

Q I was about to ask you whether he asked you to testify in his behalf.

A He did.

Q How long ago was that?

A It was shortly after my own case was opened.

Q I assume you wrote him back you had troubles of your own, is that right?

A No.

Q What did you write him?

A I think he asked me not to testify, but to write

him a statement. I wrote him a letter outlining a statement that I could put in the form of an affidavit. In the meantime it seemed only fair for him to know about my situation, or at least for his attorneys to know about it. I tried to keep this as quiet as I could. Therefore, my counsel got in touch with Dr. Condon's counsel. I believe that they explained the situation to Dr. Condon's counsel. This is --

Q Your statement that you submitted to him, I suppose, was favorable to him, was it?

A I am sure it was.

Q By the way, speaking of counsel, Doctor, there has been some mention here of a Mr. Volpe in connection with the review of your matter in 1947. Has Mr. Volpe represented you since that time?

A Yes.

Q Is he now representing you?

A No.

Q When did he represent you?

A He represented me along with Mr. Marks in connection with the government's action against Weinberg.

MR. GRAY: Against whom?

THE WITNESS: Weinberg, where it seemed possible I might be called as a witness.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q That was in 1951 or 1952?

A 1952 and 1953.

Q Did Mr. Volpe conduct the investigation in New Mexico to determine your whereabouts during the month of July --

A Mr. Volpe and Mr. Marks had joint responsibility for finding out where I was.

Q Just a couple of more questions. I am not sure if the record discloses this. If it does, I am sorry.

When you saw Dr. Chevalier, in Paris, as you testified, in November or December of 1953, how did you get in touch with him?

A I had a letter from him before we left home saying that Professor Bohr --

Q I believe you did testify.

A -- had told him we were coming to Europe and urging that if we were in Paris we try to have an evening with them. My wife called Mrs. Chevalier, found out that he was away, but that he probably could arrange to return before we left. We then did have dinner with them.

MR. ROBB: I think that is all.

MR. GRAY: I have one question. Back to Vista, Dr. Oppenheimer. Is it possible that some of these witnesses who felt there were no material changes in this draft were in effect saying that the draft really was not changed, and the military only thought it was being changed, or that was the essential notion?

THE WITNESS: I will simply quote what either DuBridge or I said to General Norstad. We said we were much disturbed by what you said yesterday. We don't know whether there is a difference between us as to real things, or whether there is a difference between us as to the words that are used. We have therefore sought to put our views in a form which will be as little irritating to you as possible and still keep them our views. We don't know whether you will like what we have now written down or not. This is not a literal quotation. I should think that was as good an expression of what we thought we were doing in that change as we could give.

MR. GRAY: Do you have some questions, Mr. Garrison, because if you do, I want to have a short break.

MR. GARRISON: I think, Mr. Chairman, we would like to have some rebuttal testimony, but it is now five o'clock, and I wonder if we might not do that tomorrow morning.

MR. GRAY: You have already indicated you would probably call Dr. Oppenheimer tomorrow morning for rebuttal testimony, and that is quite all right.

MR. ROBB: May I ask one question?

MR. GRAY: Yes.

BY MR. ROBB:

Q Was Dr. Condon's counsel Clifford Durr?

A In this recent undertaking?

Q Yes.

A No.

Q I thought it was.

A It was not at least the counsel my counsel saw. My counsel saw Hayes. I think I should not testify --

MR. MARKS: I should state for the record it was I who saw Dr. Condon's counsel, and his counsel was Mr. Henry Fowler, and Mr. Alexander Haas.

MR. TRAY: We will recess now until 9:30 tomorrow morning.

(Thereupon at 5:05 p.m., a recess was taken until Tuesday, May 4, 1954, at 9:30 a.m.)